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REMARKS

I. Summary of the Applicants' Response to the Office Action

Claims 1-9 are pending in the present application. Claims 1, 7, and 9 have been amended and the changes are shown below in the section marked "VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE." No new matter has been added to the claims.

The August 14, 2001 Office Action indicated that original claim 7 contained allowable subject matter. This subject matter has been incorporated into amended claim 1. It is therefore respectfully submitted that claim 1 and claims 2-9 that depend therefrom are in a condition for allowance. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Claims 7 and 9 were objected to in the Office Action. Claim 7 has been rewritten, and claim 9 has been amended according to the Examiner's suggestions.

The Applicants have also added new claim 10. Claim 10 is distinguishable over cited U.S. Patent 5,758,068 to Brandt et al. for at least the following reasons. Brandt et al. is directed toward the following invention:

A first identifier code from the enterprise computer system, such as the system serial number, is used for allowing the license key to identify the enterprise. A second identifier code from a computer within the enterprise system is used, which is typically a serial number from the computer to identify it to the license key as being part of the enterprise system. Lastly, a third identifier code is used, which is selected from the licensed product to be used on the enterprise system and is tied to the enterprise system number, thereby allowing the licensed program to be accessed on the enterprise system with only a single key, irrespective of the number of computers accessing the licensed program. Col. 3, lines 1-13.

The first and second identifier codes are tied to the enterprise system. The third identifier code is also tied to the enterprise system number and allows access on the enterprise system. An enterprise includes local area networks (LAN). Brandt et al. col.

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3, line 65 - col. 4, line 6. Claim 10 is directed toward a method for controlling access to software on individual user computers that are not necessarily tied to an enterprise computer system such as a LAN.

The registration key in claim 10 is generated automatically without requiring that the user enter a system serial number as shown in Brandt et al. See FIG. 7 of Brandt et al. In claim 10, the registration key is verified, and then a license key is generated to unlock the software.

Also, in the present invention, the license key allows a user to access the software without further interface with the license registration database. In Brandt et al., license manager 44 searches for a valid enterprise key 42 each time a request to use a license for a licensed program is received. Brandt et al. col. 5, lines 36-55.

Brandt et al. does not disclose "verifying the registration key after transmitting the registration key to the license registration database" wherein the "registration key [is] formed from the unique validation number and a user password created by the user," and "generating a license key number using the license registration database" wherein the license key number is used to unlock the software. Therefore, it is submitted that claim 10 is also novel and nonobvious over Brandt et al.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this Application are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance at an early date is respectfully requested.

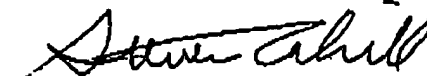
If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 650-326-2400.

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Respectfully submitted,



Steven Cahill
Reg. No. 44,578

TOWNSEND and TOWNSEND and CREW LLP
Two Embarcadero Center, 8th Floor
San Francisco, California 94111-3834
Tel: (415) 576-0200
Fax: (415) 576-0300
SJC
PA 3198374 v1

